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R 8-21-67 Saigon 2512

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ACTION EA 19

INFO EUR 25, IO 21, SAL 01, NSCE 00, CIAE 00, SSO 00, DODE 00, ISIE 00,
NSAE 00, CCO 00, SP 02, SS 35, GPM 03, SC 01, NSC 10, RSC 01, SAH 02,
L 03, H 02, P 04, INR 07, AID 30, RSR 01, /167 W

O R 071515Z AUG 67 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4190
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3709
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2108
AMCONSUL DANANG 688
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 130

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DECLASSIFIED ☑ RELEASABLE ☑
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PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 2512

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

KATHMANDU FOR AMB BUNKER

REF: REF SAIGON 2473

1. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM POLAD DANANG, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT DIFFICULTIES FACED BY PRESIDENTIAL

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CANDIDATES IN QUANG TRI AUGUST 6 WERE RESULT OF ANY DELIBERATE ACTION BY GVN. AS REPORTED REFTEL, CROWD OF UP TO 500 WAS WAITING FOR CANDIDATES AT QUANG TRI CITY (LA VANG AIRFIELD) WHEN THEIR PLANE WAS DIVERTED TO DONG HA BECAUSE OF HIGH WINDS. ALTHOUGH QUANG TRI PROVINCE CHIEF SENT A CONVOY TO DONG HA, THE CANDIDATES WERE UNAWARE OF THE FACT AT THAT TIME, AND THE DEPARTED FOR SAIGON VIA DANANG BEFORE

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THE CONVOY ARRIVED. (CANDIDATES SAY THEY EXPECTED OFFER OF HOSPITALITY FROM GENERAL LAM DURING STOP IN DANANG, BUT NONE WAS FORTHCOMING.) ARRANGEMENTS AUGUST 7 RALLY IN HUE WERE EXCELLENT ACCORDING TO POL .

2. CENTRAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE FOR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION MET MORNING AUGUST 7. AFTERNOON AUGUST 7 PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES WERE INVITED TO MEET WITH CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS DIFFICULTIES OF THE PREVIOUS DAY. ALTHOUGH AFTERNOON SESSION WAS CAREFULLY BILLED AS MEETING OF CANDIDATES WITH CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE, AND NOT AS PRESS CONFERENCE, PRESS WAS ALSO INVITED TO ATTEND. AT LEAST 100 MEMBERS OF PRESS RESPONDED,

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INCLUDING 15 - 20 AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS PLUS NBC AND ABC FILM CREWS.

3. NGUYEN VAN NGAI ACTED AS RAPPORTEUR OF AFTERNOON MEETING. ALL PRESIDENTIAL SLATES WERE REPRESENTED EXCEPT PHAM HUY CO, WHO WAS HOLDING HIS OWN PRESS CONFERENCE, AND NGUYEN DINH QUAT. NGUYEN VAN LOC REPRESENTED THIEU AND KY.

4. AFTER OPENING REMARKS BY TRAN VAN HUONG (WHOM PRESS CLEARLY TREATED AS STAR ATTRACTION), TRUONG DINH DZU GAVE BRIEF ACCOUNT OF WHAT HAPPENED AUGUST 6. HE SAID NO ONE MET THEM AT DONG HA, AN AMERICAN MILITARY AIRFIELD; US MILITARY OFFERED THEM TRANSPORTATION TO QUANG TRI BUT THEY DECLINED BECAUSE THEY WERE UNSURE OF SECURITY SITUATION. CANDIDATES THEN RETURNED TO DANANG, WHERE AGAIN THERE WAS NO ONE TO MEET THEM. HA THUC KY TELEPHONED I CORPS COMMANDER GENERAL LAM BUT WAS UNABLE TO GET THROUGH. CANDIDATES THEN DECIDED BY VOTE OF 6 IN FAVOR, 3 OPPOSED, AND ONE ABSTENTION TO RETURN TO SAIGON. (NOTE: ACCORDING TO CHAIRMAN OF

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CENTRAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE, THREE WHO WANTED TO CONTINUE CAMPAIGN IN I CORPS WERE PHAN QUANG DAN, HA

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THUC KY AND LY QUOC SINH.)

5. CANDIDATES THEN SPOKE IN ORDER IN WHICH THEY APPEAR IN FINAL POSTING. PHAN QUANG DAN SPOKE FOR SUU-DAN SLATE. (SUU IS REPORTEDLY IN HUE, HAVINGG GONE THERE SEPARATELY VIA AIR VIET-NAM ON AUGUST 6.) DAN NOTED THAT THERE IS NOTHING TO FORCE AUTHORITIES TO ORGANIZE ELECTION RALLIES, BUT IN REALITY THEY HAVE DUTY TO DO SO. "EVEN UNDER DIEM, GOVERNMENT ORGANIZED RALLIES." DAN WAS UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND WHY C-47 CARRYING CANDIDATES WAS UNABLE TO LAND AT QUANG TRI. HE PROPOSED THAT CANDIDATES MEET WITH GVN TO DISCUSS THE MATTER, AND SUGGESTED THAT CAMPAIGN IN I CORPS SHOULD BE CONTINUED.

6. HA THUC KY ONLY OBSERVED THAT AUTHORITIES SEEM TO LACK GOOD WILL FOR CONSTRUCTION OF DEMOCRACY.

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7. HOANG CO BINH BLASTED LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR THEIR NEGLIGENCE, AND WONDERED WHY THIEU AND KY WERE NOT REPRESENTED ON TRIP TO QUANG TRI. BINH DEMANDED (AS HE HAS DONE SEVERAL TIMES IN RECENT DAYS) THAT THIEU AND KY MUST GO ON LEAVE FROM THEIR GOVERNMENT POSITIONS DURING CAMPAIGN.

8. TRUONG DINH DZU, WHO ENJOYED DISPLAYING HIS FACILITY IN ENGLISH FOR BENEFIT OF THE FOREIGN PRESS, ALSO CRITICIZED GVN FOR IRRESPONSIBILITY. HE AGREED THAT PROBLEM SHOULD BE DISCUSSED WITH GVN, AND CAMPAIGN SHOULD CONTINUE. BUT DZU CONCLUDED THAT IF GOVERNMENT DISPLAYS SO LITTLE GOOD WILL, IT SHOULD MAKE WAY FOR ANOTHER GOVERNMENT.

9. TRAN VAN HUONG SUGGESTED THAT TROUBLES IN QUANG TIR WERE INTENTIONAL. HE NOTED THAT HE WOULD NOT HAVE LET SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS PREVENT HIM FROM DRIVING TO QUANG TRI FROM DONG HA, BUT ONLY TRANPSORTATION AVAILABLE WAS AMERICAN. EVEN THOUGH AMERICANS ARE FRIENDS, HE COULD NOT

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ALLOW HIMSELF TO USE AN AMERICAN VEHICLE.

10. TRAN VAN LY SAID INCIDENT AT QUANG TRI SHOWS INDIFFERENCE AND LACK OF GOOD WILL ON PART OF GVN. REPRESENTATIVES OF NGUYEN HOA HIEP SAID INCIDENT BODES ILL FOR FAIR ELECTION, AND SUGGESTED THAT FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO CANDIDATES ARE HARDLY EQUAL.

11. NGUYEN VAN LOC THEN SPOKE ON BEHALF OF THIEU-KY. HE DISPLAYED AIR VIET-NAM TICKETS WHICH HE SAID HE PURCHASED FOR TRIP TO QUANG TRI AND HUE. HOWEVER, AT LAST MINUTE HE WAS UNABLE TO MAKE THE TRIP.

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ACTION EA-09

INFO EUR-25 IO-13 SAL-01 INR-07 IE-00 CIAE-00 SSO-00 DODE-00 USIE-00
NSAE-00 CCO-00 SP-02 SS-25 GPM-03 SC-01 NSC-10 RSC-01 SAH-02
L-03 H-02 P-04 INR-07 AID-30 RSR-01 /167 W

O R 071515Z AUG 67 ZFF4 DEPT KATHMANDU
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4191
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3710
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2105
CONSUL DANANG 689
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 131

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12. LOC THEN READ VIETNAM PRESS ITEM GIVING GENERAL LAM'S VERSION OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED. GENERAL LAM POINTED OUT THAT DELEGATION WAS WAITING TO RECEIVE CANDIDATES AT QUANG TRI. LAM HIMSELF WAS UNABLE TO MEET CANDIDATES ON RETURN TRIP STOP IN DANANG BECAUSE THEY ARRIVED UNEXPECTEDLY. LOC ASKED CANDIDATES TO DISCUSS MISTAKES WITH GVN, AND NOT TO DRAW PREMATURE CONCLUSIONS. (IN REBUTTAL TO LOC, TRUONG DINH DZU SAID THAT HA THUC KY TELEPHONED GENERAL LAM TWICE TO INFORM

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HIM OF THEIR PRESENCE. FIRST TIME HE WAS TOLD LAM WAS ASLEEP, AND THE SECOND TIME THAT HE WAS ILL.)

13. VU HONG KHANH WAS LAST TO SPEAK, CHARGING THAT GVN PLOTTED TO SABOTAGE CAMPAIGN.

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14. CANDIDATES THEN INVITED PRESS TO LEAVE, AND WENT INTO CLOSSED SESSION WITH MEMBERS OF CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE. THEY PROMISED TO ISSUE COMMUNIQUE INFORMING PUBLIC OF ANY DECISIONS REACHED AND SAID THEY PLANNED TO HOLD A FORMAL CONFERENCE LATER.

15. COMMENT: (A) THE EVENTS OF AUGUST 6 AND 7 APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN THE RESULT OF A COMBINATION OF BAD PLANNING, UNFORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND A TENDENCY ON THE PART OF THE CIVILIAN CANDIDATES TO ASSUME GOVERNMENT BAD FAITH. SEVERAL CANDIDATES PROBABLY SEE ADVANTAGES IN MAKING THE MOST OF THE INCIDENT AND WILL PERSHAPS BE TEMPTED TO KEEP THE ISSUE ALIVE. WE HAVE SPOKEN TO SOME OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED, AND WHILE NOT DEFENDING THE GOVERNMENT, WE HAVE POINTED OUT THE

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FACTS AS WE HAVE THEM AND SUGGESTED THAT THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO GET ON WITH THE CAMPAIGN IN AN ORDERLY FASHION.

16. (B) WE ARE ALSO CONSIDERING WAYS IN WHICH GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CAMPAIGN COULD BE IMPROVED SO AS TO AVOID ANY REPETION OF THIS KIND OF INCIDENT. WE WILL BE DISCUSSING THE MATTER WITH APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AT VARIOUS LEVELS.

17. 73) SEVERAL CANDIDATES SUGGESTED GOING AHEAD WITH THE CAMPAIGN, AND WE BELIEVE THEY WILL DO SO. THIS UNFORTUNATE AFFAIR WILL NOT IMPROVE THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE CAMPAIGN, BUT WE SEE LITTLE DANGER OF THE CAMPAIGN BEING SIGNIFICANTLY CURTAILED OR OF ANY WITHDRAWALS FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE AS A RESULT.
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